



Specimen Submission for Rickettsial Testing Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch

1. Patients should have a clinical or epidemiologic history reasonably suggestive of rickettsial disease. Random rickettsial testing of clinically difficult cases rarely identifies rickettsial pathogens as possible etiologic agents.
2. All specimens must be accompanied by a CDC Specimen Submission Form (CDC 50.34). Separate forms should be submitted for each test request (i.e., serology, PCR, immunohistochemistry) for an individual patient.
3. All samples must be sent through your state public health laboratory or with their approval. Specimens sent directly to CDC without prior approval will not be accepted. The state laboratory will receive a copy of the report, so states are imperative about this requirement.
4. All specimens must be accompanied by all pertinent information on the CDC Submission Form:

Patient name, sex, and birthdate

Date of onset of illness

Date of specimen collection

Type of specimen (e.g., serum, whole blood, tissue, etc.)

Brief medical history (including antibiotic therapy and dates)

Brief travel and animal contact history

Submitting physician/organization, complete return address, and contact numbers

Samples for immunohistochemistry should include a copy of any other pathology report available.

5. Serum samples or fresh tissue may be submitted refrigerated on cold packs or frozen on dry ice. Serum samples and EDTA blood samples may be sent in plastic tubes (we prefer Sarstedt 2ml screw-cap tubes). Fresh tissues for PCR can be sent on sterile gauze pads moistened with sterile saline in a collection cup. Paraffin blocks or slides for immunohistochemistry should be sent at room temperature.
6. All samples should be sent directly to the Data and Specimen Handling (DASH) section who will process and deliver the samples to the Rickettsial Laboratory for testing. Do not address the package to a person's name as it will not properly route through the appropriate channels to us. The address is:

Attention: **D.A.S.H. (Attn: Unit 78)**
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30333

Tel: 404-639-2878

7. Our laboratory serves as a national reference diagnostic laboratory for diseases due to rickettsial agents and associated pathogens. Our testing is provided free-of-charge to approved agencies. Turnaround times may be extended, so prompt treatment of the patient should not be delayed while waiting upon our test results. If you require more rapid testing services, a number of commercial laboratories offer many of the rickettsial tests.
8. A listing of rickettsial tests available in our laboratory may be obtained by contacting us at (404) 639-1090.

Disease Assessment Laboratory; Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch; Mail Stop G-13; 1600 Clifton Road; Atlanta, GA 30333
Tel: (404) 639-1090; Fax: (404) 639-4436